

## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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1. No big changes have taken place in Latvian agriculture and kolkhoz life since 1952. The new decrees from Moscow, issued after Stalin's death, which dealt with the improvement of conditions on collective farms, caused some excitement. But these decrees are not yet understood, and the general attitude of the farmers is to "wait and see".

Labor and Working Hours

2. The responsibility for allocation of labor on kolkhozy rests with the brigade leaders and heads of livestock farms. Many brigade leaders do not fulfill their duties as organizers but attend to their private affairs, get drunk, and do not go to work; they have been known not to arrive on the farms to allocate tasks to their workers before 9:00 a.m. A brigade has to cultivate a large area of land and it is a usual occurrence for work not to start before 10 or 11 in the morning.
3. The minimum number or norm of working days per year is 300 for men and 200 for women. The number of working days per livestock brigade varies from 600 to 800 a year. During the winter months work is done only from sunrise to sunset, that is, 5 to 7 hours per day. On most kolkhozy there are usually three or four workers who do not do a single day's work in the year for the kolkhoz, and 10 to 15 who fulfill less than 50 workdays in the year. At some kolkhozy, threshing is seldom attended by all the workers, as a sign of passive protest, and it therefore becomes a very long, drawn-out process. The Communists themselves admit there are many shortcomings on the collective farms.
4. In December 1952, Party members and activists held meetings in all rayons. The main subject under discussion was the education of new personnel; and, to achieve this, courses are now held for kolkhoz chairmen, brigade leaders, and heads of livestock farms. So far, the results have been poor, and the qualifications of existing personnel improve very slowly. There has recently been a tendency to

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appoint chairmen of a higher educational standard, who are agriculturalists belonging to the Communist Party. Efforts are also being made to increase the education of kolkhoz laborers, and every kolkhoz now has courses in agriculture and animal husbandry, which are usually given by local experts.

5. Chairmen, brigade leaders, and heads of livestock farms are still often dismissed for political reasons, which shows that the Communists themselves are to a certain extent responsible for disorganization on the collective farms.

#### Crops and Livestock

6. The average yield of grain in Latvia in 1952 was several centners higher than in 1951, and in some places as much as five centners per hectare. This was mainly because of the good summer. For example, in the Bauska Rayon the average yield for winter crops was 18.7 centners per hectare, and for summer crops 17.1 centners per hectare.
7. During 1952, the area under crops in Latvia had been increased by 80,000 hectares, but in nearly all rayons considerable areas were not sown with winter crops. For example, on six kolkhozy in the Ventspils Rayon, a total area of 188 hectares remained unsown; and in the Dundage Rayon the winter crops program was only completed on two collective farms, and one-fifth of the area planned for crops in this rayon remained unsown. This year, however, because of the early spring, 80 percent of the kolkhozy had completed their spring sowing by 31 May.
8. No rayon in Latvia fulfilled its quota for 1952 fall ploughing; for example, the Ventspils Rayon completed only 30 percent, and the Kandava Rayon only 36 percent. Last season many crops remained unharvested. For example, on the Liesma Kolkhoz, in the Ventspils Rayon, 23 hectares of the summer grain, 10 hectares of potatoes, and about one hectare of root crops were unharvested.
9. Because of the poor hay crop in 1952, many kolkhozy were able to gather only about half their required cattle fodder, and the kolkhozy Aktivists, Kopdarbiba, and Padomju Latvija, in the Kuldiga rayon, harvested only one-fifth of their needs. There was, therefore, a shortage of cattle fodder. As a result of this, the milk yield during the winter months was much reduced. On some kolkhozy in the Kuldiga Rayon, for example, milk dropped from a daily yield of six to seven liters per head during October to two to four liters per head in January. So far as can be judged, the 1953 hay harvest is good.

#### Construction Work

10. In the Ventspils Rayon last year construction included sheds to house 1,000 head of cattle, seven pig sties to house 800 pigs, one chicken house to hold 1,500 birds, and three stables to house 120 horses.

#### Machine Tractor Stations

11. There are now 107 MTS in Latvia. The stations are still being supplied with KD-35 and DT-54 tractors, and for drainage work and ditch digging the S-80 tractor is used. There is a shortage of repair workers in the MTS, and tractor repairs are rarely completed in time for the next season's work.
12. The kolkhozy have to provide the drivers for the tractors, and the local MTS hold courses for farm workers, but frequently the kolkhozy send only a few workers to attend these courses, and at times none at all. Following the Soviet pattern, tractor drivers are now being trained to do other work, so that they can be employed all the year round.

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13. There are plans to increase the number of tractors on MTS in Latvia and to train sufficient drivers to allow each tractor to work two shifts per day. For example, the Kabile MTS has 33 tractors and 33 drivers to work the first shift and 14 drivers for the second shift; the Zura MTS (total number of tractors not stated) 33 drivers for the first shift, and 21 drivers for the second shift.
14. Nevertheless, in spite of the efforts of the Communists, the MTS organization does not fulfill its tasks. Ventpils Rayon did not complete its quota of fall ploughing, and the Zur MTS ploughed only 2,496 hectares out of a quota of 3,138 hectares. In the Dundaga Rayon, on the Kolkhoz Cina, the MTS ploughed 43 hectares out of a quota of 351 hectares. The Stalina Cels Kolkhoz ploughed a total of 227 hectares, of which 162 hectares were done by the MTS.
15. The Mezotne MTS has 38 tractors of the following types: 16 KD-35; 5 DT-54; 9 KTZ; 8 U2; they also have 10 drainage machines.

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1. Comment: it was stated that the area under crop was increased by 108,000 hectares in 1952.

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